**NAME:** OLADIPO TOMI ISAAC

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**BRIEF DEFINITION OF THE FOLLOWING INTELLECTUAL PROTECTION METHODS.**

1. **PATENT:** A **patent** is a form of intellectual property that gives the owner the legal right to exclude others from making, using, selling and importing an invention for a limited period of years, in exchange for publishing an enabling public disclosure of the invention. In most countries patent rights fall under civil law and the patent holder needs to sue someone infringing the patent in order to enforce his or her rights. In some industries patents are an essential form of competitive advantage; in others they are irrelevant. It allows you to prevent others from using your invention for commercial purposes for up to 20 years. You decide who can produce, sell or import your invention in those countries in which you own a valid patent.

The procedure for granting patents, requirements placed on the patentee, and the extent of the exclusive rights vary widely between countries according to national laws and international agreements. Typically, however, a patent application must include one or more claims that define the invention. A patent may include many claims, each of which defines a specific property right. Once a patent expires, an invention becomes common property and can then be freely used by anyone.

1. **COPYRIGHT:** Copyright refers to the legal right of the owner of intellectual property. In simpler terms, copyright is the right to copy. This means that the original creators of products and anyone they give authorization to are the only ones with the exclusive right to reproduce the work.

**HOW COPYRIGHTING WORKS**

When someone creates a product that is viewed as original and that required significant mental activity to create, this product becomes an intellectual property that must be protected from unauthorized duplication. Examples of unique creations include computer software, art, poetry, graphic designs, musical lyrics and compositions, novels, film, original architectural designs, website content, etc. One safeguard that can be used to legally protect an original creation is copyright.

Under copyright law, a work is considered original if the author created it from independent thinking void of duplication. This type of work is known as an Original Work of Authorship (OWA). Anyone with an original work of authorship automatically has the copyright to that work, preventing anyone else from using or replicating it. The copyright can be registered voluntarily by the original owner if they would like to get an upper hand in the legal system if the need arises. Not all types of work can be copyrighted. A copyright does not protect ideas, discoveries, concepts, or theories. [Brand names](https://www.investopedia.com/terms/b/brand-identity.asp), [logos](https://www.investopedia.com/terms/l/logo.asp), slogans, domain names, and titles also cannot be protected under copyright law. For an original work to be copyrighted, it has to be in tangible form. This means that any speech, discoveries, musical scores, or ideas must be written down in physical form in order to be protected by copyright.

1. **TRADEMARK:** A trademark is a recognizable insignia, phrase, word, or symbol that denotes a specific product and legally differentiates it from all other products of its kind. A trademark exclusively identifies a product as belonging to a specific company and recognizes the company's ownership of the brand. Similar to a trademark, a [service mark](https://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/service-mark.asp) identifies and distinguishes the source of a service rather than a product, and the term “trademark” is often used to refer to both trademarks and service marks. Trademarks are generally considered a form of [intellectual property](https://www.investopedia.com/terms/i/intellectualproperty.asp).

**UNDERSTANDING TRADEMARKS**

A trademark can be a corporate logo, a slogan, a brand, or [simply the name of a product](https://www.investopedia.com/articles/personal-finance/120415/trade-name-vs-trademark-know-difference.asp). For example, few would think of bottling a beverage and naming it Coca Cola or of using the famous wave from its logo. It is clear by now that the name "Coca Cola," and its logo belong to [The Coca-Cola Company](https://www.investopedia.com/markets/quote?tvwidgetsymbol=ko).

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 **EXAMPLES OF TRADEMARKS**

1. **TRADE SECRET:** A trade secret is any practice or process of a company that is generally not known outside of the company. Information considered a trade secret gives the company an economic advantage over its competitors and is often a product of internal [research and development](https://www.investopedia.com/terms/r/randd.asp).

Trade secrets are defined differently based on jurisdiction, but all have the following characteristics in common:

* They are not public information.
* Their secrecy provides an economic benefit to their holder.
* Their secrecy is actively protected.